The Copywriting Guide Master Worksheet

If you want to create content that sells, you first need to learn what works and what doesn't.

Sometimes though, no matter how much you apply yourself, it can be hard to keep all this info in mind when you first sit down to create copy.

With that in mind, I've created a handy Copywriting Essentials checklist you can follow to make sure you've remembered all the MOST important steps.

There are some nuts and bolts you need to get nailed down, or as I call them, the absolute Essentials of Copywriting that SELLS.

This guide presents these essentials in five stages you can progress through to check you've optimised your content to sell.

There are also some handy Bonus checklists at the end to help you boost your content's reach on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.

STEP ONE) DEFINE YOUR BRAND

Define Your Unique Selling Point

Your number one goal is to sell or promote your product or a service. To give people a reason to buy from you, you need to define your USP, or unique selling point.

Write down here what it is that you offer that is different or better than what your competitors are offering:

To boost your brand profile, you can use social proof. Social proof is massively persuasive and encourages customer confidence.

Have you worked with any trusted organisations or well-known brands or people you could mention in your product marketing?
If so, who? Write them down:

- **Alternatively, do you have a lot of great product or service reviews that you can refer to when you come to create your content?**

Remember values and goals.

What does your company stand for?
Write this down:

What MAIN purpose does it have?
Write this down:

What top three goals do you want your marketing to achieve for your brand this year?

1)
2)
3)

STEP 2) MARKET RESEARCH

Now you need to get to know your perfect customer before you can create content that appeals, engages, and SELLS.

There are some questions you should be asking that will help walk you through the steps you need to take to do this.

- **Do you know your market?**
- **Have you researched your ideal customer to discover what drives them?**

If so, use this space to write down their biggest issue or problem:

Then write down how you are solving this issue for them with your product or service:

- **Have you observed your competitors?**

To do this look at successful brands in your niche and see how they approach their content marketing.

What are the top things your competitors are doing right now that your brand is not?

1)
2)
3)

Remember, to speak to your customers in a language they will understand, you need to first know how they think and talk about the products they love.

- **Have you looked up products in your niche on sites like Amazon Reviews?**

How do your target customers describe products they love?
Write the top five keywords and phrases they use most frequently down here:

1)
2)
3)
4)
5)

What do they love about these products?
Write this down here:

How do they describe what they don't love?

Why are they unhappy with these things?
Write this down here:

Once you know this information, you can better angle your copy to hit customers pain points and offer them the solutions they want.

STEP THREE) OPTIMISING YOUR CONTENT'S REACH

Now you know what your customers want and how they think, you need to maximise your opportunity to connect with them.

- **Have you maximised your content's discoverability?**

- **Is your SEO optimised on your website and in your content?**
- **Have you done keyword research using Google Keyword Planner and Google Trends?**
- **Are your keywords niched down to hone in on your perfect customer?**
- **Are they relevant to your product or service?**

Remember don't try to be all things to all people. Niche is more effective, as long as people are searching for your keywords.

Don't forget hashtags.

- **Are you using the right hashtags on Twitter and on Instagram?**

- **Have you conducted market research into your hashtags using tools like Hootsuite, to see what your tags target market are searching for?**

- **Have you looked up the top trending tags in your niche on Twitter and Instagram?**

Doing these things will hugely boost your discoverability rate.

Local SEO is important too

You also need to ensure customers in your local area can engage with your content easily.

- **On your website, have you optimised your title tags?**

- **Do they mention your location?**

- **Have you included local terms in your H1 and H2 tags?**

Both these things are vital when it comes to Local search, so Google and Google users can see your page is specific to a local area.

Semantic search is also important. Google ranks pages higher that don't use repetitive, unrelated keywords.

- **Does your content on your pages have a natural array of related words?**

- **Are you using similar phrases and words to your target keywords in your content?**

Finally, remember that social proof? You can use it here too.

- **Do you have a large or growing following on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, or your blog?**

If so, they will be the launchpad for testing your content's effectiveness.

STEP FOUR) STRUCTURING YOUR CONTENT TO SELL

Remember the AIDA formula?

Attract, Interest, Desire Action - in that order!

You shouldn't reveal everything straight away in your promo content. The goal is to keep people reading and engage their interest so you can get them to your call to action and then get them to take the action you want.

- **Does your headline and first paragraph ATTRACT your perfect customer?**

A great way of attracting your market is to make the headline niche and relevant.

- Is your headline relevant?

Or is it too vague?

- **Does your copy INTEREST?**

One way of telling whether it will be of interest is to see if it touches on your reader's issues.

- In your body copy, do you talk about the single biggest problem or DESIRE your readers have?

This is where having done proper market research really helps.

- **Does your solution tap into your target market's DESIRE/ single biggest problem need?**

If it doesn't you need to refine your target market. If it does you need to be sure you are making this clear.

Does your copy make it clear to your potential customers that what you are offering will help them either:

- Solve their single biggest issue… (Which they DESIRE greatly to be solved)

Or

- Give them their single biggest DESIRE

Finally, you need to get people to take ACTION.

- **Does your call to action encourage people to take ONE or at most two highly specific actions?**

It's not a good idea to confuse people with too many options.

- **Does it re-emphasize why they need to take this ACTION? I.e. because it will help them attain their single biggest DESIRE?**

- **Does your call to action introduce an element of urgency?**

Remember FOMO aka the Fear Of Missing Out?

In your content you should be tapping into this element of your customer's psychology. Particularly in your call to action.

One way to tap into this easily is to use limited time promotional offers.

- **Does your copy highlight why customers will be missing out if they don't take ACTION now?**

STEP FIVE) POLISHING THINGS UP

Now we need to clean up and add some polish to make your content more engaging. Here are some essential elements you should check off against your copy to ensure it is as appealing to readers and browsers as possible.

1) **Is your copy clear?**

- Have you checked it to make sure it's free of waffle?
- Have you trimmed extra words and unnecessary detail?
- Is every word ESSENTIAL?
- Are you conveying what you need to tell customers in the shortest amount of words possible?
- Have you checked your grammar and spelling?

You can use software like Grammarly to help you do this if you need extra help, or just use your word processing program's spellcheck and grammar check.

2) **Are you being persuasive or just pushy?**

One way of telling if you're being persuasive or pushy is by evaluating what your content is telling potential customers.

- Are you outlining the benefits *to your customers* of your product and service?

Or are you just telling people how great your products and services are?

3) **Is your copy exciting?**

Read your content aloud.

- Does it sound natural and flowing?
- Does it sound like you are having a conversation with a friend? (Hint, it should)

Your copy should grab people's attention from the get-go. Make use of emotive, relevant headlines, and punchy sentences that hit their pain points.

- Is your headline optimised to clearly explain what you're offering?

Or

- Does it touch on a common problem you know your target market is concerned about?
- Is your copy using a mix of short and long sentences?
- Does it ask reader's questions?
- Does it intrigue them, particularly at the start?

4) **Is your content structured?**

You don't want to confuse your customers with a jumble of words. What you want to do instead is guide them neatly through you content, like holding their hands right to the end, where they click that button to purchase.

To achieve optimal structure, you need to start by honestly reviewing your content.

- Is it broken up into clean, easy to read blocks of text that are not too long?

Think two or three shortish sentences per paragraph and no more.

- Have you made use of sub-headers to add interest and break up the text?

- Are you using bullet points or numbered lists where possible?

EXTRA STEP - COPYWRITING HACKS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is where you'll probably be promoting your content the most. It's also where you have a great opportunity to reach a large market of new potential customers.

SUPERHACK CHECKLIST FOR CREATING FACEBOOK AD COPY THAT SELLS:

- **Does your content make your brand image clear?**

- **Is your brand image consistent with what your trying to sell and appealing to your target market?**

What does your brand image make customer's feel?
Write this down here:

Think about famous brands, like Apple or Pepsi.

What customers are they trying to attract?
Write this down:

What image do they project?
Write this down:

How do they make their customers feel?
Write this down:

Is your copy solution orientated?

- Does it focus on the lifestyle or personal transformation your product offers, or the problem your product or service solves?

Does your copy make use of social proof?

People don't typically trust Facebook Ads, and will usually scroll past, so when you get the chance to show that customers have had a positive experience using your product, you should do so.

- Are you featuring any customer written testimonials, reviews, photos with a customer quote, or videos alongside your ad content?

Does your Facebook Ad copy make use of scarcity and FOMO?

- Are you using deadlines like limited time promotions to up the sense of urgency?

- **Are you using an image or video in all your Facebook posts?**

This is Important as research has proven images increase your post engagement rate by over 100%.

You might also want to consider colour choice in your image, did you know yellow has been found to be more effective when used in Facebook Ads than almost any other colour?

- **Does your Facebook Ad have a killer headline?**

- **Is it relevant to the customer group you are trying to target?**

After an image, this is the No1 factor that will decide whether people keep reading your Facebook Ad copy.

- **Is your header AS BRIEF as it can be while being specific enough so your audience can see the relevance?**

"How YOU can improve your brand image and sell more" is good, "Five ways to brand boost and increase sales" is better.

- **Are you using a sub-header to be even more descriptive and tell them exactly what they can expect?**

I.e. "Get my free sales-boosting minicourse when you enter your email address".

- **Is your copy easy on the eye and exciting?**

- **Are you breaking up paragraphs and heavy blocks of text?**

- **Are you using emojis to enhance your text, especially in your headers?**

Emojis have been proven to attract more engagement on Facebook than plain text alone.

BONUS CHECKLIST FOR INSTAGRAM

- Are you using niche tags that have a high engagement rate?
- Have you looked to see what your competitors are using?
- Have you researched the hashtags your customers use to tag topics they are interested in that are relevant to your brand?
- Are you using the right Instagram tags for your post goals?

Choose from….

1)Community tags

Designed to connect Instagram users with an interest in a specific topic.

Can be local or more general.

#BlackCats would one an example of a niche but still general topic. #BlackCatsInBolton would be an example of a local specific niche topic.

OR

2) **Campaign Hashtags**

Designed to promote a promotional period or event, they run for a specific number of days, weeks, or months.

#12daysofXmasSale would be an example a tag like this.

OR

3) **Branded Hashtags**

Used to connect followers of your brand and encourage them to share content. Helps others discover you and are an effective way of demonstrating social proof and gaining new followers.

Example of a branded hashtag would be using your brand name in your hashtag or a relevant phrase like #NeonKicks for a campaign to promote the bright colours in your sneaker range.

You can also use a combination of all the above, where relevant. Experiment with hashtags on Insta and see what brings you the best results.

BONUS CHECKLIST TO BOOST YOUR CONTENT ON TWITTER

- **Have you looked at ads for successful competing products?**

What are they doing right that you could incorporate into your own ads or posts?

Write this down here:

- **Have you looked at complaints?**
- **Are you avoiding making these mistakes in your own content posts?**
- **Are you using tools like Hootsuite to research trending hashtags?**
- **Are you using tools like Hootsuite and Twitter search to discover what your customers tweeting about?**
- **Are you using relevant niche keywords?**
- **Are you posting content regularly?**
- **Are you using too many hashtags?**

Don't overstuff your posts as if you have more tags than content if can be a turn off.

- **Have you shortened any URLs in your post using a site like bit.ly?**

This is important as you have a limited character amount on Twitter and people switch off if you display messy looking URLS.

BONUS CHECKLIST FOR YOUTUBE

It's important not to forget about video as it's the most shared content medium, and currently makes up over 80% of all content shared on the internet.

- **Are you currently using video in your marketing approach?**
- **Do you have written content you could present in video format by creating animated guides or slideshows with voiceovers?**
- **Can you make video versions of your explainer guides?**

- **Have you optimised your YouTube Video Descriptions?**

This is essential to getting found, and for helping people to decide whether they want to watch till the end or not.

- **Do your YouTube descriptions contain highly scoring keywords that are relevant to your topic?**

- **Do your YouTube descriptions contain a clear specific description of what your video is all about?**

Remember you need to specifically describe what people will learn if they watch your video if you don't want to get bad reviews on YouTube.

NEXT STEPS

Okay, so you've hit publish and now you're wondering what to do next. Well, there are a couple more important steps you should take to optimise your copywriting success

First, you should be monitoring the results your content and Ads gets, analysing these, and then tweaking appropriately.

On Facebook, you can use tools like Facebook Business Manager to do this and on Google you can use Google Ads Manager.

- **How much engagement did your post or ad get?**

- **Did you get any complaints?**

If you received any complaints, try and address these in your next piece of content.

The next thing is to keep creating great content, using this list as your guide. Creating engaging content is the BEST way to get seen, get found, and get customers.

Remember to keep this checklist with you EVERY TIME you create a piece of content. This will help you ensure you include all the MOST IMPORTANT factors that go into creating an amazing piece of highly persuasive copy that sells.